

Press ReleaseNational Labor Relations Board

March 25, 2010

Contact:

Office of Public Affairs 202-273-1991 publicinfo@nlrb.gov www.nlrb.gov

NLRB Member Peter Schaumber Speaks at ABA Mid-Winter Meeting

In remarks delivered at the recent American Bar Association Labor and Employment Law Section Mid-Winter Meeting, NLRB Member Peter Schaumber reflected on the state of U.S. labor law and drew contrasts between his views and those recently expressed by his colleague, NLRB Chairman Wilma Liebman, in a speech at the Washington University Law School in St. Louis, Mo.

Schaumber, a former Chairman whose term ends in late August, said he was troubled by "the possibility of an upcoming wholesale reversal of Bush Board precedent." He said significant changes could be cause for Congressional intervention and could "reignite and intensify the negative view of the NLRB as mired in partisanship."

Schaumber attributed the steady decline of organized labor in the United States to a combination of factors that include dissatisfaction with a union model premised on an antagonistic relationship between workers and employers. He said U.S. labor laws are in need of reform but suggested changes that are not now being discussed, "from the manner in which Board members are selected to the possible role of work councils to whether consideration should be given to abolishing the Board all together in favor of a Federal labor and employment court with judges appointed for life."

The full text of Member Schaumber's speech, which was originally delivered March 3 to the ABA mid-winter meeting in Puerto Rico, is <u>here</u>. Chairman Liebman's Feb. 17 speech to the Washington University Law School can be found <u>here</u>.

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency vested with the power to safeguard employees' rights to organize and to determine whether to have unions as their bargaining representative. The agency also acts to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices committed by private sector employers and unions.